



Canadian Radio-television and
Telecommunications Commission

Conseil de la radiodiffusion et
des télécommunications canadiennes

Canada



News Release

June 15, 1995

CRTC AUTHORIZES FUNDY'S ACQUISITION OF CABLE 2000; LICENSEE TO COLLABORATE WITH ACADIAN REPRESENTATIVES TO IMPROVE SERVICES

OTTAWA/HULL -- The CRTC today approved the transfer of control of Cable 2000 Inc., licensee of 31 cable distribution systems located for the most part in New Brunswick, to Fundy Cable Ltd., a company controlled by Mr. C. William Stanley of Saint John. The Commission also renewed, for three years, the cable distribution licences for Bathurst, Campbellton, Dalhousie and Jacquet River (Decision CRTC 95-330). The transfer of control and renewal of licences were examined at a CRTC public hearing held in Halifax this past April.

"The Commission carefully assessed the benefits associated with Fundy's acquisition of Cable 2000 and we believe that this transaction is in the interest of all communities concerned," said CRTC Chairman Keith Spicer. "We note, in particular, Fundy's commitment to substantially increase the channel capacity of the newly acquired systems at no extra cost to subscribers."

"The short licence terms granted for four of these systems will enable us to review within a reasonable period the licensee's progress in responding to subscribers' concerns relating to French-language and community programming," Mr. Spicer added. "Nonetheless, we are quite pleased with the attitude of co-operation demonstrated by Fundy and the Société des Acadiens et Acadiennes du Nouveau-Brunswick (SAANB) with a view to ensuring a more equitable distribution of French-language programming in areas with predominantly Francophone populations, while being sensitive to the costs borne by cable subscribers."

Fundy has offered \$75 million to acquire control of Cable 2000, including the assumption of an existing debt of \$25 million. The distributor plans to invest an additional \$7.5 million over five years, of which \$6.9 million will be used to upgrade all Cable 2000 systems to a capacity of 77 channels. The Commission has obtained the assurance that the costs of the transaction and technical upgrades will not be passed along to subscribers, regardless of whether the particular system is subject to rate regulation.

The CRTC also renewed the cable distribution licences for Bathurst, Campbellton, Dalhousie and Jacquet River for three years extending from July 1, 1995 to August 31, 1998. In doing so, the Commission expects the licensee to adhere to some important commitments made at the public hearing -- in particular, that Fundy will work in partnership with the SAANB towards providing a balance of services on basic cable which would reflect the communities' language groups. Fundy must submit a report each year to the CRTC, detailing the progress in implementing these commitments.

Finally, the cable company has committed to purchase additional community programming equipment for seven locations, including Campbellton and Dalhousie, as well as Caraquet, Carleton, Kedgewick/St. Quentin, Shippegan and Tracadie. The Commission encourages Fundy to develop community programs that reflect subscriber interests and concerns.

- 30 -

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